



# STANFORD UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER

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STANFORD UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE  
Department of Genetics

Members of this department are repeatedly asked for their views about genetic factors in intelligence, and about possible differences among races in this respect. We have repeatedly expressed ourselves about the futility of attempts to identify genetic components of behavioral differences among races in the face of overwhelming differences in environmental milieu. Environmental effects are a priori likely to bias the outcome of most efforts to investigate this question with present techniques; and special cautions are therefore needed to prevent public misunderstandings about such research in this field as may be attempted. No significant new information or insight has emerged in the last half-dozen years to alter this view.

A credible demonstration of race-genetic factors, were it achievable, could perhaps be useful in designing strategies for ameliorating socially harmful personality traits, like aggression, learning defect or perhaps racism. The advertisement of unproven hypotheses about race differences seems likely to do little but harm, not only to the harmony and welfare of different groups, but even to the possibility of pursuing some lines of research that might illuminate these very questions. The policies that should be advocated if these hypotheses were true, are a matter of social rather than scientific judgment. It seems hardly necessary to go into these on the basis of mere speculation about the scientific facts. It seems to us nevertheless that coercive differential sterilization is almost the most ineffective, inhumane and ethically indefensible proposal that could be devised, whether for genetic improvement or for the rationalization of welfare assistance.

Memo from

~~JOSHUA LEDERBERG~~

To: Genetics Faculty  
(professors)

Re: Shockley again.

Draft statement.  
for Daily?

If you see some merit in getting us again on the record, and would personally wish to adhere to the above, please confirm to Ruth at your early convenience.

LT. J. P. KENNEDY, JR.

MOLECULAR BIOLOGY

HEREDITY

CINE, DEDICATED TO RESEARCH IN MENTAL RETARDATION

NEUROBIOLOGY

DEVELOPMENTAL MEDICINE